

taxes should be levied, no treaty of peace or declaration of war be made, without the common consent of the provinces. In case of lack of unanimity in these important matters, the governors of provinces should act as arbitrators. No single province might contract an alliance without the approval of all, and all should use the same coinage. In regard to religion, Holland and Zeeland should be free to act as they pleased, the other provinces as they should find expedient for the commonweal, subject, however, to the stipulation, in accordance with the Pacification of Ghent, that no individual should be molested on the score of religion. Any province professing the Catholic religion should be eligible as a member of the union, provided it submitted to the conditions of the confederation. All provincial officials from the governor downwards should swear to maintain these conditions, and any subsequent modifications must be made by common consent. The deputies of the provinces should assemble at Utrecht whenever summoned, and their decisions should be held binding on any absent members, who, however, might send written proxies.

This memorable document was signed by John of Nassau for Guelderland and Zutphen, and by the deputies of Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, and the Frisian provinces. The adhesion of Ghent, Antwerp, Bruges, and several other cities of Brabant and Flanders was subsequently added. It established a defensive confederacy or bond, not a free State. It simply posited the conditions of united action, in furtherance of a certain policy. It was the work of a party, not of a people, and this party did not yet go the length of disclaiming the authority of Philip. It established no theory of the State, attempted no alteration of the ancient provincial constitutions and usages. Nevertheless, it virtually created a State within the State, and it needed only the disavowal of allegiance to the Spanish Philip to transform this *imperium in imperio* into an independent commonwealth. This consummation—the climax of fifteen years of struggle—was not long in coming. The attempt to negotiate a compromise with Philip's representative, the Duke of Terranova, through the mediation of the Emperor Rudolf II., at Cologne in the spring of 1579, only demonstrated once more, in spite of months of sophistry and